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DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN ESTONIAN SSRSovetskaya Estoniya  
Tallin, 17 Oct 1953

[This report presents a summary of the report by I. Kebin, Secretary, Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Estonian SSR, to the Seventh Plenum of the committee, in session on 9, 10 October 1953, pursuant to the decree of the September Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU "On Measures for the Further Development of Agriculture in the USSR."]

Estonian agriculture is based on animal husbandry; the sale of animal products provides more than 70 percent of the incomes of the majority of the republic's kolkhozes.

Despite the setbacks occasioned by the war and occupation, kolkhozes and sovkhoses of the republic made remarkable recoveries in expanding the number of cattle, hogs, sheep, and poultry. A 30-percent increase in the size of cattle herds took place in kolkhozes from 1 January 1951 to 1 January 1953. Even higher gains were made in rayons specializing in livestock breeding.

The chief obstacles to a further development of animal husbandry in the republic are caused by inadequacies in the fodder base, in the construction of animal shelters, and in the mechanization of labor-consuming operations.

Insufficient interest by kolkhozes in developing animal husbandry has recently been overcome by the establishment of higher procurement and purchase prices and lower norms for obligatory deliveries.

As a result of higher prices for meat, milk, and eggs which are sold to the state, kolkhozes of the republic will receive incomes two to three times greater than those preceding the price change.

Higher kolkhoz incomes are dependent on an increase in animal productivity as well as on higher prices. The need for greater quantities of animal products is especially great with respect to milk and pork. The republic's potentialities for increasing milk production are enormous; the yearly average for the republic is now approximately 1,700 liters of milk per cow.

As a result of advances made in cattle breeding, 96 percent of kolkhoz herds are made up of purebred cattle of local origin; in 1950, purebred cattle made up 75 percent of such herds. Locally bred cattle produce high milk yields; with no great effort, it should be possible to obtain annual yields averaging 3,000-4,000 liters of milk per cow.

Productivity must also be increased in other branches of animal husbandry, especially in hog raising. The present pork yield per 100 hectares of arable land is about 8 quintals, an extremely unsatisfactory quantity which must be raised to 30 quintals in the near future.

Serious obstacles in the development of animal husbandry are caused by the high degree of barrenness in female livestock and the prevalence of cattle plague in some kolkhozes of the republic. The plan for the development of animal husbandry is, on the whole, unfulfilled by kolkhozes of the republic.

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For an appreciable increase in animal products reaching the consumer, kolkhozes must increase the size of their herds between 1 October 1953 and 1 October 1954 as follows: cattle, 11.9 percent, including cows, 21.7 percent; hogs, 3.6 percent; and sheep, 11.9 percent.

Expansion and strengthening of the fodder base is fundamental for successful development of collectivized animal husbandry. In many kolkhozes of the republic, the fodder-base question is not taken seriously with the result that animal-husbandry development is further retarded.

The main reasons for the inadequate fodder base are poor sowing, care, and harvesting of fodder crops and neglect of natural hay meadows and pastures. In 1952, stored ensilage averaged only 0.9 metric ton per head of cattle instead of 5-6 metric tons according to plan. Application of organic and mineral fertilizers to natural hay meadows is carried out on a very limited scale.

The decree of the plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU pointed out that maize must be grown more extensively for ensilage in the Baltic republics. Thus, it is necessary to be energetically occupied with growing maize for this purpose. As Secretary Khrushchev said, if kolkhozes obtained a yield of only 250-300 quintals of green mass per hectare, the possibility of obtaining 225-260 kilograms of butter per hectare would be indicated.

The usual yield of sunflower ensilage in kolkhozes of the republic now ranges between 10 and 20 metric tons per hectare.

By 1955, the area planted to maize in kolkhozes of the republic must be increased to at least 4,000 hectares, that devoted to sweet clover, to at least 30,000 hectares, that sown to lupine, to 5,000 hectares, and that occupied by sunflowers and other ensilage crops, to at least 15,000 hectares.

A basic shortcoming in the development of fodder production is the neglect of fodder-crop seed growing in kolkhozes and sovkhozes of the republic.

The unsatisfactory rate of constructing animal shelters is a serious obstacle to the development of animal husbandry. The construction of such shelters in kolkhozes of the republic from 1950 to 1 September 1953 included 146 cow sheds, 11 pigsties, 4 sheepfolds, 30 horse stables, and 58 poultry houses.

The annual plan for constructing animal shelters, however, remains unfilled year after year. Minimum construction for 1954 should include accommodations for at least 20,000 cows, 5,000 calves, 25,000 hogs, and 100,000 fowl.

The areas devoted to potatoes and vegetables as well as gross harvests of crops increased in recent years. But, due to poor growing practices, harvests are still small in many kolkhozes. Little manure or mineral fertilizer is used. The checkrow planting method is employed only to a limited extent -- on 336 hectares in 1952 and on only 306 hectares in 1953. In recent years, the number of hotbeds and hothouses increased somewhat in kolkhozes and sovkhozes, but their number is far from satisfactory.

In 1954, the area planted to potatoes in kolkhozes of the republic is to be expanded approximately 10-12 percent; production of potatoes and vegetables is also to be greater in sovkhozes. In 1954, at least 35,000 hectares of potatoes are to be planted by the checkrow method.

The yield of grain and industrial crops remains low in the republic due to the failure of MTS and kolkhozes to perform basic work in growing and harvesting these crops at the right times. To assure higher yields, crop rotation must be introduced in at least 400 kolkhozes in 1954 and in all remaining kolkhozes by the spring of 1955, more organic fertilizer must be applied to the fields, lime must be used on acid soils, and weed control must be effectively organized.

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During the postwar years, the number of MTS increased from 24 to 69. The number of tractors is now 4.3 times as great as in 1949. About 700 combines work on kolkhoz fields. Consequently, the degree of field-work mechanization in kolkhozes of the republic has risen from 10 percent in 1949 to 70 percent at present. However, there is at present little mechanization in fodder preparation and potato and vegetable growing and none in horticulture.

MTS lack qualified permanent cadres. There is considerable cadre turnover in most MTS; during the first 8 months of 1953, 189 persons left MTS for a variety of unjustifiable reasons. Lack of repair facilities in MTS delays tractor and machinery repair. At present, 8 repair shops, 16 garages, and 4 fuel bases are under construction, but work on them is progressing slowly. In 1954, it is planned to increase considerably the construction volume in MTS.

There are six MMS (mechanized land-improvement stations) in the republic and most MTS have land-improvement brigades. But MMS and MTS fail to fulfill their plans year after year.

Thus far, most agricultural specialists have not been directly concerned with production work. In the near future, it is necessary to direct at least 1,400 agronomists and zootechnicians with higher or secondary educations to MTS.

Now that collectivization has been completed in the republic, it is necessary to take practical measures to build well constructed kolkhoz villages.

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